



**Rhode Island Department of Health**  
Three Capitol Hill  
Providence, RI 02908-5094

[www.health.ri.gov](http://www.health.ri.gov)

## **Memo**

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*Safe and Healthy Lives in Safe and Healthy Communities*

Date: April 11, 2008

To: City & Town Building Officials

From: Alfred J. Cabral, Supervising Industrial Hygienist, Asbestos Program

Re: Building Demolition – Asbestos Containing Materials

The RI Department of Health' Asbestos Program has recently responded to several incidents involving a building or structure that is in the process of demolition for which asbestos containing building components had not been removed. Asbestos is a class A carcinogen, which for public health protection, must be safely handled and disposed. Asbestos may be present in a wide range of building materials such as pipe, boiler and tank insulation, plasters, flooring applications, exterior roofing and siding. We therefore would like to take this opportunity to clarify building owner responsibilities regarding asbestos identification and removal in these situations.

Federal and State regulations require that "prior to demolition, a building must be thoroughly inspected for the presence of friable and non-friable asbestos containing material". This inspection must be conducted by a person accredited in the identification of asbestos containing building materials. The RI Department of Health, Asbestos Control Program certifies asbestos inspector consultants who possess the necessary accreditation (current list enclosed.)

If asbestos containing materials are identified in a structure to be demolished, they must be removed by a RI licensed asbestos abatement contractor following an approved asbestos abatement plan. In the event of an emergency situation, such as a fire damage building or unsafe structure ordered demolished by the municipal building official, procedures are in place to expedite the process. However, the asbestos containing material must be handled by a licensed asbestos abatement contractor and properly disposed.

We are seeking your assistance in assuring asbestos containing materials are correctly identified and removed prior to a building's demolition. As a component of a demolition permit application to your Office, it is asked that you request a copy of a certification by an accredited inspector indicating that no asbestos containing material is present or that an asbestos abatement plan has been approved by the RI Department of Health for the removal of all identified asbestos containing material before demolition activities commence.

For questions on asbestos identification, abatement plan application process, or abatement procedures, please direct inquiries to the RI Department of Health, Healthy Homes and Environment Program, 3 Capitol Hill, Room 206, Providence RI, (401) 222-2438, or visit our website at:

**<http://www.health.ri.gov/environment/occupational/asbestos/index.php>**